Support and expand peer support promoting positive youth development and prosocial relationships

- A vital component of peer support is individuals feeling prepared and giving accurate information. Organizations utilizing a peer model should continue to ensure sufficient structure, supports, and training.
- Support the establishment and growth of safe spaces that encourage a culture of community and resilience.

Peer support provides a unique opportunity as peers can offer their unique lived experience with behavioral health conditions to provide mentorship and support. Benefits include:
  - Skill development
  - Decrease in stigma
  - Increased motivation
  - Gaining hope
  - Decrease in feelings of isolation

Peer support can assist by:
  - Increasing service quality
  - Decreasing turnover
  - Decreasing stigma
  - Enhancing the affordability of care
  - Decreasing issues of transportation
  - Decreasing the impact and misinformation of social media
  - Increasing people’s knowledge of both behavioral health and available resources
  - Providing baseline prevention care
  - Providing culturally responsive services

For peer support in particular, people are looking for community and to feel less alone in their experiences. One of our group members just said it so beautifully - They’re like, I go to therapy to learn skills, but I come to a group to love and be loved.

~ Key informant interviewee

I actually got a mentor [...] and she really helped me boost my confidence and figure out who I am as a person. And I guess she also helped me, my worth, I guess, and like helped me, I don’t know, try to think positive more.

~ Focus group youth

Contact CIT@healthdistrict.org for more information.